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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

COUNTRY Poland

SUBJECT Polish Comments on: Regime Reactions to Riots in German Democratic Republic and Czechoslovakia/Attitude of Polish Communist Leaders to Political Upheavals in USSR/
Political Reappearance of Zymierski and Berling/
Use of Szczecin as Transit Port/1953 Harvest

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1. "The following information dates from March through most of September 1953.

Regime Reactions to Riots in German Democratic Republic and Czechoslovakia

2. "All Poles [redacted] denied that there had been any riots in Poland in connection with similar events in East Germany and Czechoslovakia. They knew about the German and Czech riots, however, and there was great excitement all over Poland. The regime functionaries were pretty nervous and more than usually 'vigilant'. Guards and controls were strengthened, particularly on the railways and in the ports. Soviet troops in Poland were moved to Germany.
3. "Now this nervousness has ceased and the Soviet troops have returned to their Polish garrisons. In August 1953, some artillery units came back to Szczecin from East Germany and they have returned to other places in East Poland.

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Attitude of Polish Communist Leaders to Political Upheavals in USSR

4. "Stalin's death and Beria's fall caused a great wave of optimism to surge over Poland. Everybody believed that a series of internal revolutions would shake the USSR as a result of the struggle for power on the top level and that the Soviet empire would be dismembered. This optimism was strengthened by the fact that in the first months after Stalin's death and the struggle between Malenkov and Beria, the Polish Communist leaders seemed to be left without any guidance. Therefore, they were as careful as possible not to take any sides, not to do anything that might lead to disgrace in the future. Even the papers avoided all ideological subjects and mentioned no names except 'Marx-Engels' and 'Lenin-Stalin' coupled together.
5. "Now they seem to have received instructions and have broken their silence. Activity has again blossomed in all spheres, and increased political propaganda and vigilance against enemies of the people are the order of the day.
6. "The top leaders are setting an example of the unity of the Party. Bierut and Rokossovsky have taken to appearing together in public. Both keep making political speeches. Rokossovsky, who hitherto spoke perhaps twice yearly on the most important occasions, is now inspecting various garrisons and speaking to soldiers and officers.

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Political Reappearance of Zymierski and Berling

7. "The fact that Marshal Zymierski and General Zygmunt Berling have again appeared on the political stage has caused surprise among the population.
8. "Berling was dismissed from his post of commander of the Polish Division (formed in the USSR) when in the autumn of 1944 he tried to assist the Warsaw insurgents. Officially he was sent to study at a military academy in Moscow but nobody knows whether he actually went there and many doubt it, believing that he probably suffered some form of detention. In 1946 he was officially appointed chief of the officers' school at Rembertow in Poland but never took over this post and actually a Soviet became the chief instead of him. Now he has been appointed Deputy Minister for State-Owned Farms (PCR).
9. "Zymierski, though appointed a member of the State Council when Rokossovsky became Commander-in-Chief, never actually took part in the meetings of the Council. He was very seldom seen in Warsaw and then always in the company of two Soviet officers who were believed to be his guards. Now he is seen much more often and without the Soviets. He has also been attending the meetings of the State Council.
10. "The Poles did not know what terminated the disgrace of the above two officers. They believe this may have happened to placate the opposition in the CP who had a certain esteem for both Zymierski and Berling.
11. "They had not heard about Gomulka's release. To their knowledge, he had not been seen anywhere and they think that his release is unlikely as attacks against Titoism have intensified of late at meetings of local CP organizations.

Importance of Szczecin as Transit Port

12. Szczecin is still an important transit port for freight from East Germany. Cargo arrives on Oder barges and by rail, and is shipped to the USSR from Szczecin. The Soviet ships usually arrive empty but some bring a little grain and this is again shipped to East Germany.

Harvest

13. "This year's harvest is a medium one. The individual peasants will take care of theirs but probably in the PCR, part of it will remain in the fields as it did last year. The PCR are very short of manpower."

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